

Is it time to use the F word?

No not that one -- the other one -- Fascism.

When Teen Vogue uses the word "fascism" to describe what we are living through, it's time to sharpen our own understanding. We are entering an election season in which the word is thrown about indiscriminately, amidst police terror and threats by the current administration. Meanwhile the government spends trillions to bail out industries suffering from the pandemic while hardly blinking at the escalating death toll. This educational is intended to bolster our scientific understanding of fascism, while exploring its concrete manifestations today.

We are trying to keep the material to read and prep less than an hour or so.

- **Attached is a short series of excerpts from the Program** (<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2018/11/program-of-the-league-of-revolutionaries-for-a-new-america-2018/>), **the Political Resolution** (<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2018/09/illuminating-the-path-to-a-new-america/>) **and the new Rally about Fascism** (<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2020/07/the-elections-and-beyond-the-outcome-is-up-to-us/>)
- MSNBC says yes, it is time: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AxO7Cg29mU>
- And then there is Portland, a very incisive interview on Democracy now with Lilith Sinclair, Afro-indigenous activist and organizer: https://www.democracynow.org/2020/7/21/portland_protests_federal_response
- And these comments about Chicago from organizer Kelly Hayes:
"It's very important to see these gestures from commercial entities and public officials as what they are: an attempt to buy back their legitimacy. When a system is called into question, people with power and authority make efforts to dissociate themselves from the problem. Sacrifices and gestures are made. Sacrifices might take the form of indictments for individual cops or minor reductions in police funding. Gestures might take the form of painting Black Lives Matter on a city street or removing an episode of the Golden Girls where the characters wore mud masks. These measures run the gamut from feel-good but empty PR parachutes to "what the fucking fuck, nobody asked for that nonsense."
Sacrifices and gestures are how these commercial interests and elected officials buy their way into not being seen as part of the problem. In some cases, existing organizing efforts and campaigns are getting results because of this momentum. I hope we see more of that and that folks continue to make bold demands."
"Another reminder not go to the counter demo in Chicago today [Saturday]. The cop supporters won't have the statue they were going to rally around. That's hilarious and it's good enough. Also, the counter demo organizers have a serious respectability complex. It's a major problem. There's no reason to attend."

Questions for consideration:

1. How does our observation of the real world correspond to the advance of Fascism?
2. Looking at Portland, and the pandemic, and the rebellions, and at the latest news in Chicago (Columbus etc) -- how does our observation of reality square with the assessment of the Program and Political Resolution?

3. How does the ruling class use the carrot as well as the stick at times like these? In what way is the ruling class united and in what way divided?
4. What do revolutionaries do in times like these?

From the LRNA Program: (<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2018/11/program-of-the-league-of-revolutionaries-for-a-new-america-2018/>)

Wageless digital production is antagonistic to capitalism, which is based on the buying and selling of labor power. This antagonism is economically, socially and politically polarizing society, making social and political revolution inevitable. A new fascist State form, the naked rule of corporate power, has arisen to oppose this motion. Society must take over these corporations or these corporations will continue to take over society.

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The new class must have political power to achieve these goals. In the effort to achieve this political power, the League fights shoulder to shoulder with all political organizations and sections of society that fight against the growing poverty, social and ecological destruction, fascism and war.

From the LRNA Political Resolution:

FASCISM (<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2018/09/illuminating-the-path-to-a-new-america/>)

Today fascism — the merger of the corporations and the State — is an objective reflection of an economic revolution that is destroying the foundation of private property itself. While there are subjective aspects to the development of fascism — things that are consciously engineered by the ruling class — the fascism we are experiencing in the U.S. and elsewhere today is not a subjective choice of the ruling class, but is an objective reflection of economic development. As the economic base of society is transformed, the social and political superstructure that rests on and reflects the base must also be transformed. Fascism today seeks to facilitate a whole new world based on private property without capitalism. This process has distinct, yet interrelated, aspects. The objective foundation of fascism developed first. These economic aspects of fascism are evidenced in the merger of the corporations and the State, and are now in place. Laws have been and are being passed to eliminate the economic rights of the workers and to further erode their standard of living. Laws have been and are being passed to contain the upsurges of the masses. These laws are transforming the legal structure to protect the interests of the corporations and the ruling class to the exclusion of the American people.

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People are being beaten and murdered by a militarized police force, families are being torn apart and deported, the everyday conversations and activities of tens of millions of Americans are under surveillance by the State, the government is moving against those who are speaking out. We are seeing the creation of an environment in which the lives of a growing section of the American people are considered worthless.

This offensive — what we call the social face of fascism — is an admission by the ruling class of their weakness, not evidence of their strength. It shows us

that the ruling class is so weak that it has to turn to naked and open violence in order to enforce some element of social cohesion.

The workers' fight for survival, their fight for basic necessities of life, can defeat any lies and tricks of the ruling class. Revolutionaries rely on the objectivity of that fight to introduce new ideas.

The qualitatively new technology confronts society with either the continuation of private property with a fascist State, or the possibility of a cooperative society based on the public ownership of socially necessary means of production and the distribution of the social product based on need. The modern fascist movement is arising on the foundation of this antagonism, and in response to it. The real target is the political system — the substitution of one State form for another, that will allow the full scope of private property interests to operate without restriction.

This cannot happen automatically. The ruling class needs a political motion to clear away the obstacles, to move the new economy forward. They are laying the foundation for a new political movement that is based on the interests of corporate power that is completely merged with the State. The ruling class is adjusting its ideology to the new conditions, feeling its way towards a more fully formed fascist political ideology that will facilitate the new fascist forms of government and State power. The importance of the bitter battles taking place among the ruling class over how they will carry out their program is part of the struggle to coalesce a fascist movement that reflects the new conditions.

The growing economic crisis is bound to bring on political crisis — the clash of two antagonistic processes, with one forced to destroy the other to survive. The developing crisis is the impossibility of maintaining the bourgeois democratic superstructure with the qualitatively new economic foundation that is being created. To succeed in this effort, the ruling class is building a mass base for fascism.

U.S. history is rooted in genocide of indigenous peoples, slavery, the concept of a "white man's country" and the conquest and exploitation of other peoples. Today, a whole culture of fascist violence, hatred and disregard for human life has taken hold. It is the ideological foundation for the outlook that the individual has no rights and a government and society that has no economic or moral responsibility for the well-being of its people.

From the July-August 2020 Rally Comrades! "The Elections and Beyond"

A Better Idea of What Is Needed (<http://rallycomrades.lrna.org/2020/07/the-elections-and-beyond-the-outcome-is-up-to-us/>)

This nightmare vision of the ruling class is not the only vision, however. The working class has a better one. To save lives, the people need testing, tracking, and treatment on demand. Justice for George Floyd, defunding the police, ending mass incarceration, and releasing children and adults from

immigrant detention centers have become an inseparable part of our concept of freedom. The future of the planet itself has become a critical aspect of our vision of the future.

Shelter for the unhoused, canceling the rent, ending evictions and foreclosures, and taking over vacant homes have become battle cries across the country. Medicare for All and the expansion of Medicaid has become more urgent as unemployment strips people of their health insurance, and the pandemic death toll surpasses 125,000. Basic human needs are human rights.

The fascism that threatens us cannot be defeated without this working-class vision, one where life's necessities are distributed according to need, and people can live safely and free from harm. The contribution of the Bernie Sanders campaign was to advance the program that the people's scattered, separate battles were already fighting for. Although Sanders had to withdraw his candidacy, it was never about one election. It was about building a movement. Sanders unquestionably won the campaign policy debate, and the movement continues. Workers cannot give up fighting for health care, food, housing, and other necessities, especially with millions more unemployed every week.